



Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Governor Bob McDonnell

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**Governor McDonnell Announces Virginia State
Parks to Honor All Active-Duty Military and
Virginia Veterans with Free Admission Through
December 31st**

*~Will Also Offer Free Admission to All Visitors June 13th-19th
During the Week-Long Celebration of Virginia State Parks~*

RICHMOND – Two days before the start of Memorial Day Weekend, Governor Bob McDonnell announced today that as part of the year-long celebration of the 75th anniversary of Virginia State Parks, all active-duty military, as well as veterans residing in Virginia, will receive free admission to all Virginia State Parks beginning this Friday and continuing through the end of the year.

“Our brave women and men of the military are called upon to sacrifice in countless ways. Now, a grateful Commonwealth thanks them for their service with free admission to all Virginia State Parks from this weekend through the end of the year. This is a small gesture of appreciation for the women and men who have given so much to defend our liberty and freedom. There are 327,000 active-duty military personnel, and families, as well as 823,000 armed forces veterans, who make their homes here in Virginia. We hope many will take advantage of this opportunity. We are also pleased to offer free admission to Virginia’s State Parks for all visitors from June 13th-19th, in recognition of the 75th Anniversary of the Parks. I encourage all Virginians to get out to a State Park this summer and discover first-hand our Commonwealth’s beauty and wonders.”

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, which manages the award-winning Virginia State Parks, is waiving all parking fees, the only fees charged at State Parks by the Commonwealth, for all Virginia-resident armed forces veterans. Fees are also waived for all active duty members of the armed forces including activated reservists and National Guardsmen, regardless of their state of residency. The offer is also good for the immediate family of active-duty personnel even if that person is not with the family.

To participate, veterans must either have a retired military identification card or a standard discharge form known as a DD214. Active duty personnel must have their photo identification card issued by the Department of Defense, and family members must have their government-issued ID card.

“Virginia has the best state parks in the country, and Governor McDonnell and I remain committed to making Virginia the nation’s most veteran-friendly state,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security Terrie Suit. “This celebratory admission is a natural fit that continues our long-standing commitment to Virginia’s active and retired military.”

The free admission for military is not the only special in the year-long celebration in Virginia’s state parks, which opened June 15, 1936.

“We’ll offer free parking to all visitors June 13-19 as we celebrate our 75th anniversary all week long,” said DCR Director David Johnson. “With more than 8 million visitors a year, and around a \$189 million impact on Virginia’s economy, Virginia State Parks play an important role in Virginia’s outstanding quality of life.”

For more information about Virginia State Parks, visit www.virginiastateparks.gov. Additional information about the free admission to state parks can be found below.

Virginia State Parks 75th Anniversary Salute to America’s Military

As part of the Virginia State Parks' 75th anniversary celebration, active-duty military personnel and their families and armed forces veterans are invited to state parks at no cost starting the Friday of Memorial Day weekend through the end of 2011.

- What are we waiving?

- The standard parking fee is the only fee involved, with the exception of the Southwest Virginia Museum where the daily admission fee is waived for only the eligible person.
- Who is eligible?
 - Armed forces veterans who are Virginia residents.
 - Active duty members of the armed forces, including activated reservists and National Guardsmen (including those who are active for annual duty). Active-duty personnel may have residency in any state.
 - Immediate family members of active-duty personnel, even if the active-duty person is not with the family (he or she may be deployed, for instance), but an adult family member age 18 or older must be part of the party.
- What proof or documentation must be presented?
 - Veterans must have either a retired military identification card or a standard form for discharged military personnel called a “DD214.”
 - Active duty military personnel must have a photo identification card issued by the Department of Defense or their branch of the armed forces.
 - Family members of active-duty personnel must have the official government-issued ID card

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